

1 SEP 1970

# Mrs. Agnes E. Meyer Dies; Widow of Publisher of Post

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Agnes E. Meyer, 83, widow of the former publisher of the Washington Post, died during the night at her summer home in Mount Kisco, N.Y.

Mrs. Meyer, who had been called a "one-woman reform movement," had devoted many years to working for improvements in a vast range of social services, education and women's rights.

Many of the social service programs received funds from the Eugene and Agnes Meyer Foundation.

She was born Agnes Elizabeth Ernst in New York City, where she grew up. She was graduated from Barnard College in 1907, and her interest in reporting began that year when she became the first woman reporter on the old New York Morning Sun.

After a year of study at the Sorbonne in Paris she began her first book, "Chinese Painting as Reflected in the Thought and Art of Li-Lung-Mien."

She married financier Eugene Meyer in 1910, and later studied at Columbia University. Meyer, who died in 1959, bought the Washington Post in 1933. Their daughter, Katharine Graham, is now publisher of the Post.

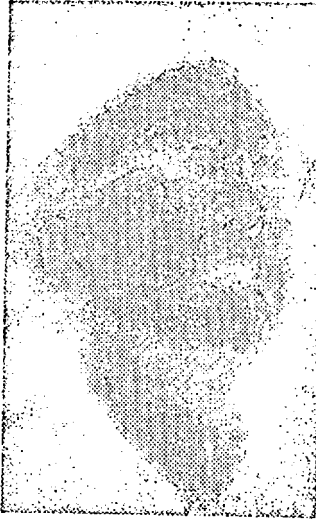
One of Mrs. Meyer's early involvements in social work began in 1912 when she served with a New York committee that established maternity clinics there.

In 1923 she became head of the Westchester County Recreation Commission, a position she held for 13 years. Although she had a family of her own, Mrs. Meyer believed that woman's place was in more than just the home.

During that period she was active in New York Republican politics and was a delegate to the party's national convention in 1924.

In the 1930s she wrote articles on social problems and also reviewed books by her friend, novelist Thomas Mann. She translated his "The Coming Victory of Democracy." Both Presidents Herbert Hoover and Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed her to terms on the Library of Congress trust board.

Her husband had been involved in government service



MRS. AGNES E. MEYER

since 1917, so the family lived here a great deal of that time. He was a governor of the Federal Reserve Board and chairman of the Reconstruction Finance Corp. board in the 1930s.

## Fortune Grew

Mr. Meyer's fortune grew from investments in copper, rails and motors. Some of his enterprises included subsidiaries of the Anaconda and Kennecott copper empires, Maxwell Motors (later purchased by Walter Chrysler) and the National Aniline & Chemical Corp.

It was National Aniline that added mightily to the growing fortune, however.

The Washington Post, which he bought in 1933 at auction with a sealed bid of \$825,000, then had a circulation of 50,000. Circulation was up to about 200,000 in 1950, and the paper bought out a competitor, the Washington Times-Herald, in 1954.

He made his wife vice president in 1933 and part-owner in 1935. The Washington Post Co., of which Mrs. Graham also is president, currently includes Newsweek magazine and WTOP television and radio here. Mrs. Graham succeeded her husband, Philip, after his death in 1963.

## Returns to Reporting

Mrs. Meyer, while helping to mold the paper's policies, re- turned to the news business in the 1940s she went to England to

write about women, children and food on the home front and also that country's health program.

In other articles, written in the United States, she exposed "shameful social conditions" people endured in areas of war industry concentration, the lagging production and poor morale in some airplane plants, and segregation in the Army. These articles appeared as the book "Journey Through Chaos" in 1944.

Mrs. Meyer was active in helping veterans after World War II, and before the war's end had called for the creation of a department of health, education and security. Such a department was established about eight years later.

## Popular Lecturer

Mrs. Meyer was a popular lecturer, speaking on her philosophy of education, welfare, medical care and integration.

She quit the Republican party in 1960, largely because of then-Vice President Richard M. Nixon, she said. She said she cast her first Democratic vote in 1956.

"The American people will not again be fooled by Mr. Nixon's public relations staff," she said. "They will be told . . . that he has grown with his job, that he is no longer the brash youth of 40 who slandered his opponents. . . ."

Later that year Mrs. Meyer was vice chairman of the Citizens for Kennedy and Johnson.

## Sincere Concern

The rewards of Mr. and Mrs. Meyer's sincere civic concern may be seen throughout the city in such places as the Eugene Meyer Pavilion of George Washington University Hospital and the Meyer Elementary School in Northwest, as well as in housing development, children's theater projects, Planned Parenthood clinics and in other programs in areas in which inequities existed.

Mrs. Meyer, as chairman of the District Auditorium Commission, long had urged locating the cultural center in Foggy Bottom. She also was a collector and student of Chinese art and was

She was a member of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, the National Municipal League, the Cosmopolitan Club of New York, the Sulgrave Club and the Women's National Press Club. She also had been a trustee of Barnard College.

She was a friend of the late Charles Lang Freer who donated the Freer Gallery of Art here, and was the only living person who was allowed to present gifts of art to the museum.

Among the many national and area awards she received was the first Ourisman Memorial Civic Award presented on behalf of the Jewish Community Center for her "meritorious and outstanding services and leadership in Washington."

Mrs. Meyer lived here at 1624 Crescent Place NW.

Besides Mrs. Graham, she leaves two other daughters, Mrs. Pare Lorentz of Armonk, N.Y., and Mrs. William A. Epstein of Scarsdale, N.Y.; a son, Dr. Eugene Meyer 3rd of Baltimore, 12 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Another daughter, Mrs. Florence Homolka, died in 1962.